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THE TUBERCULOSIS EXPOSITION, BALTIMORE

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THE Tuberculosis Exposition held in Baltimore during the last week of January, 1904, was an event of unusual importance and of peculiar interest. It was naturally expected that such interest would be felt in the medical and scientific world, but that it should be aroused among the people generally to such an extent as was shown by the remarkable crowds, quite beyond the capacity of the University Hall to accommodate, who gathered every day and evening was a matter of astonishment to everybody and of deep gratification to the Committee of the Exposition, who had labored with such untiring energy in its behalf.

The exhibit lasted one week, and was open daily from ten A.M. to ten P.M. Lectures were given daily by noted medical men known widely as leaders of the war against tuberculosis. The exhibits were arranged in the long halls and corridors of McCoy Hall and on the walls and in the assembly-room. Statistics, charts, and diagrams showing the prevalence and distribution of tuberculosis in the United States and in Maryland, and the relations of age, sex, and occupations to tuberculosis, were shown, and the questions of race and heredity were here interestingly presented. A section took up the matter of tenement houses, sweat-shops, and factories, and through charts and photographs showed conditions and improvements resulting from recent revision of laws and other measures of reform. Plans and elevations, photographs and models, illustrated every conceivable variety of hospital, sanatorium, tent, or sleeping-shack. One of the most interesting features of the exhibit was the valuable collection of old books and portraits belonging to Dr. Osler and others, through which the historical aspect of the subject was shown and the present connected with the past. Arrangements were made by the provision of a number of demonstrators to conduct small groups of

people through the exposition in order that they might benefit fully by its teachings. Medical students, student nurses from the various schools and hospitals, teachers from the public schools, working-women's clubs, and other charitable societies were thus shown about and the various interesting and important features of the exhibits carefully explained. It is impossible to describe the interest shown by all classes, and the pathetic eagerness of a certain number who visited the place again and again, asking questions which showed only too plainly the desire to glean some knowledge which could be carried away to furnish help or hope. Of keen interest to nurses was the exhibit of "House and Home Hygiene." This, beginning with photographs of interiors and exteriors of homes, dwelling especially upon every available adjunct to the house,—porches, verandas, fire-escapes,—which could afford space out-of-doors for the consumptive, went on to show carefully arranged wheeling- and reclining-chairs for out-of-door treatment, suitable clothing, sleeping-bags, and many varieties of sputum-cups and flasks, etc. It would be of interest to nurses if this exhibit could be described in detail and fully illustrated with photographs, as showing what may be done for poor consumptives in their homes by really simple care and treatment.

A feature which received marked attention from visitors was the model sick-room for consumptive patients. No attempt was made here to show a room with modern luxuries. Simplicity, exquisite cleanliness, convenience, and suitability were the points dwelt upon, and the necessity for having as cheerful and homelike an atmosphere as could be secured compatible with the requirements for the care of such patients and the protection of others about them. The horrors known as antiseptic furniture, which, however necessary for an operating-room, has no place in the room which is the life of a sick person, were studiously avoided, yet we are sure all necessary precautions for safety were observed. This portion of the exhibit was prepared by Miss G. C. Ross and Miss Eleanor Wood, assistant superintendents at the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

As a member of the general committee, the writer asked of its chairman the privilege of looking into the question of house-to-house visitation of consumptive patients by nurses. Permission was readily granted, and letters asking for data on this subject were at once sent to twenty-five of the older and larger District and Visiting Nurses' Associations of the country. In reply some exceedingly interesting and suggestive letters were received. For the special purpose for which they were desired, however, many of them proved inadequate, owing to the fact that much of the work which they described was not recorded in statistical or tabulated form, and also that any special work in the care of tuberculous patients was of very recent origin.

The two facts of importance elicited were that during the year 1903 a new interest and activity in the care of tuberculous patients had been aroused in existing societies, and that in two or three cities nurses were devoting themselves wholly to the visitation of tuberculous patients in their homes. The latter are Miss Grace Forman, whose excellent work for the last nine months as visiting nurse of the Vanderbilt Clinic, New York, is well known to nurses through the pages of this JOURNAL; Miss Jean Hopkins, who has recently undertaken similar work in connection with the Bellevue Clinic, New York, and Miss Reba Thelin, visiting nurse of the Johns Hopkins Dispensary, Baltimore, whose work has just begun. Owing probably to initiative of the Visiting Nurses' Society in Chicago, and under its auspices, a society composed of prominent professional and charitable men and women has been formed during the year for the prevention of tuberculosis, and is doing noteworthy work. In Boston the District Nurses coöperate with the Board of Health and with the Committee for the Relief and Control of Tuberculosis. In New York, nurses are working in connection with the Committee for the Prevention of Tuberculosis and the Charity Organization Society, and quite lately with the Board of Health. The writer found that the only practicable way of presenting in any reasonably effective form the work which is being done, both by societies and individuals, was through a brief summary of existing agencies and methods. This is presented elsewhere in the JOURNAL.

The manifest usefulness of the work of visiting nurses is such that the time seems to be reached when a general conference might prove a valuable means of bringing together workers to present their various points of view in a field where the problems are of many kinds, of common interest, and of wide-spread importance. A national society or federation of district nurses seems to be the next necessity in consolidating and making more efficient a work which has so signally proved itself.

MESSAGE BY THE BLIND.—The *Medical Magazine* says: "Among the Japanese, from whom we have yet much to learn, massage is generally recognized as the work of the blind. The sightless Japanese operators are masters in their useful craft. The blind are usually endowed, by way of compensation for their loss of sight, with a sense of touch exceptionally acute, so that here is a field in which they may surpass their seeing fellows. Massage is chiefly dependent for its success upon the delicacy of its application, which depends in its turn upon the nicety of the operator's sense of touch."